

Internship Opportunities at the International Institute of Connecticut

Mission

The International Institute is a statewide nonprofit organization that assists refugees and immigrants resolve legal, economic, linguistic and social barriers so that they become self-sufficient, integrated and contributing members of the community. IICONN achieves this mission by providing a compassionate array of high-quality legal, social and educational programming and by promoting cross cultural understanding and decent treatment for all.

Description of IICONN

The International Institute of Connecticut (IICONN), founded in 1918, is a statewide nonprofit human service agency that addresses the need to provide immigrants and refugees in Connecticut with services to help them become self-sufficient, integrated and contributing members of the community. The organization focuses on helping those individuals who face significant barriers to adjusting to their new environment, and offers legal, social, linguistic and educational programs to help them overcome these obstacles. IICONN also provides special services to victims of serious crimes such as human trafficking, torture, and domestic violence. Each year, IICONN assists over 7000 individuals from its offices in Bridgeport, Stamford, Derby, and Hartford. IICONN is distinguished from other organizations in Connecticut providing resettlement and services to immigrants in three ways:

- IICONN is the only statewide provider of legal immigration services that is recognized by the U. S. Board of Immigration Appeals and is the only nonprofit legal service provider of immigration services that offers a full array of legal immigration services, including court representation, victim assistance, and asylum application assistance.
- IICONN is the only nonprofit in Southwestern Connecticut providing refugee resettlement services and specialized case management for refugees and asylees.
- IICONN is the only organization in Connecticut that provides comprehensive services to combat human trafficking in Connecticut, including assistance in identifying and assisting victims of all forms of sex and labor trafficking.

IICONN assists its clients by providing social, educational, linguistic and legal services through the following five core programs:

- Refugee Resettlement & Employment Services
- Victim and Human Trafficking Services
- Interpretation and Translation Services
- Legal Immigration and Citizenship Services
- Community Outreach & Education

Requirements for Internship Candidacy

Successful applicants for internships with IICONN programs must:

- Have an interest in international affairs or working in a diverse community
- A strong desire to serve and assist vulnerable communities and peoples coming from conflict areas outside the United States

- The willingness to become an advocate for IICONN clients and peoples who need our assistance
- A willingness and openness to follow directions and learn
- Ability to pass a background check initiated by The Institute

Description of IICONN Programs and Qualities found in Successful Applicants

Refugee Resettlement & Employment Service

IICONN is one of three agencies in Connecticut selected by the US Department of State to provide refugees with initial resettlement offered by the United States government. IICONN provides these services to approximately 100 new refugees per year and assists an additional 100 refugees and asylees who reside in greater Bridgeport. IICONN assists adults and families who have fled war and persecution in their native countries and in many cases have spent years, even decades, in refugee camps. IICONN provides the immediate basic services to these individuals and assists them in obtaining housing, medical assistance, cultural and community orientations, employment and eventual self-sufficiency so they may become integrated into the community. IICONN's service delivery model is based on culturally appropriate case management, workforce readiness, and holistic supportive services.

Duties:

- Assisting Case Managers with program services including, but not limited to:
 - Interviewing refugee clients to collect information
 - Organizing and filing client information for later use
 - Assist with community orientation and client resettlement
 - Arranging donations of goods to be provided for clients
 - Transporting or accompanying clients to appointments, ranging from social services to medical
- Employment services work will also include:
 - Interviewing clients to collect work history
 - Creating resumes on clients behalf
 - Assisting clients with job search and applications
 - Helping to educate clients about navigating through employment process

Requirements:

- Openness to working with international and vulnerable communities
- Desire to be an advocate for clients during their integration
- Ability and wiliness to transport clients to various locations is preferred

Victim & Human Trafficking Services:

IICONN provides an array of services to immigrants who are victims of serious crimes such as human trafficking, domestic violence, sexual assault and torture. These vulnerable immigrants face a variety of unique cultural, social, economic, legal and practical challenges. In addition to providing direct legal and social services to victims, the staff works to: strengthen cooperation between law enforcement agencies and victim service providers, enhance successful prosecution of trafficking cases, train service providers to recognize and report signs of potential human trafficking and to provide appropriate assistance to victims, educate the community at large to recognize and report signs of potential human trafficking, and prevent trafficking in our rural and urban communities. In 2012, IICONN was awarded a new competitive grant to provide holistic

services to survivors of torture, ensuring a seamless array of culturally appropriate legal, social, medical and mental health services through a formal collaboration of community providers representing a variety of sectors.

Duties:

- Providing administrative assistance to program managers
- Interviewing victim clients to collect personal history
- Arranging appointments and services on clients behalf
- Helping Case Managers ensure quality of service provided to clients

Requirements:

- An desire to help and serve vulnerable individuals
- Ability to empathize with clients coming from difficult personal situations
- Some familiarity with social work services preferred, but not required
- Ability and wiliness to transport clients to various locations is preferred
- For Human Trafficking Services, some level of proficiency with Spanish is required

Interpretation and Translation Services:

IICONN provides interpretation and translation services to Connecticut businesses, agencies, and individuals who need assistance in translating and interpreting non-English documents or vice versa. IICONN provides translation and interpretation services to its customers in more than 40 languages and provides these services to numerous healthcare, legal, educational, nonprofit and government clients located throughout the state. The interpreter/translation program also supports IICONN's core programs; by ensuring appropriate language access is available to its participants.

Duties:

- Assist Program Manager as needed with language department organization and services
- Translating documents from foreign languages to English and Visa Versa, including legal documents, personal letters, transcripts, ect.
- Acting as an interpreter for clients, including individuals, groups, businesses, and other IICONN services

Requirements:

- Proficiency or fluency in a foreign language, including read, writing, and/or speaking
- Capable of interpreting or translating clearly, without personal bias

For questions and follow-up, please contact Luke Sharples, Volunteer Coordinator at lsharples@iiconn.org